December is pen
less
and
raking
through
his
pockets
for
Snow

December is Penniless and Raking Through His Pockets for Snow
Poems by Indigo Gabriel

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Titles are italicised, otherwise the start of each new poem is lilac

Sound and light and smell
stream new—an overflow
of images pouring through.

The dire dance
is twirling slow.

Even now—cherub-faced
and sugar-lipped,
hands clenched, eyes bright,
heart ill-equipped.

Even now,
from the very beginning—
From his first breath,
from his heart singing—

Even now, he has begun to go.

Push-bikes screeching, laughter roaring,
knees scathed and scuffed—
his heart is soaring.

His life is tossing to and fro.

He is shouting that he never wants to go.

Clouds peppering sky with soft
pink kisses. He holds her hands tight,
smiles—wishes.

And he's thinking this would not be a bad way to go.

Coffee-caramel clouds…
her hazel eyes glimmer.
Fetching an eyelash from her cheek,
he watches it shimmer.

And he thinks that this would not be a bad way to go.

The wind blows bare the dandelions
and she wonders what wind wishes for.

And he knows
she will not be a bad way to go.

River inked black—
this is where his heart cracked.
A star-smudged sky,
charcoal-shadowed.

All his dazzling deaths,

his darling breaths,
every sky that ever stretched—

dance and twirl before him now.

And it's not a bad way to go.

Swan Song

There is beauty in your careful walk,
and beauty in your tuck of hair.

There is beauty in your silken talk,
and beauty in your take of air.

There is beauty in your cloud-gold locks
that chain you to your eyes.

There's a catch in all the throats of clocks
that signals compromise.

There is sweetness in your sun-wet lips
and a carelessness in the words you chance.

There is a sound of sugar as it drips
from your every startling glance.

There is a beauty to your body
that tells every move to dance.

There's a sadness to your tilted neck,
and a stillness in your life.

There's a swan-like curve to your bent-long back
that lingers on your spine.

There's a folded wing on elbow-string
that swims into a feathered limb—
        feathered finger,
        feathered tip.
Footsteps creeping to the cliff.

There's a life-lost wish in every bliss
that you feign to endure.

There is beauty in your careful walk.

There is a sound.

Fitty

You need
to have
a plan.
And superannuation
is a fact
of life.
And suicide
is a fact
of life.
And men
will take
their lives.
And men
with children
they love
more
than anything
will take
their lives.

And the
rope
grants
wishes.

And
you will
sing
in
alleys.
And you
will sing
of
dying
in
the alleys.
And people
will dance
to your
dying
in the
alleys.
And people
will pay
you
pennies
in
the alleys.

And you

will strum
through
shaking skin
while the secret
God
won't
let you
in.
And the
broken
heart,
and the
broken
mind,
sustain.
And the
suffering
sustains.

And
I
don't
know
how
to live
this
life
that
so
many—
beautiful
before
me—
have
tossed
to
the
gutter.

And you
cry,
and you
feed
yourself full,
and keep
filling
and filling
again.
And you
cling
to warm-bodied
ledges

who love
you
or who
want
love
from you.
And you shiver.
And shovel
yourself
out
nightly.
Strum
beneath
the
streetlight
sun.

And
the
dark
wins again,
being
less
dark
than
the day.

And the
please
breaks
the
throat—
hangs
itself
in
the
throat.

Divinity
is
not
enough.
Even
love
fails.

And the
streets
will be
a
little
lonelier

without
the
voice
of a
dead
man—
another
tragedy
like
floss
to
the
pile.

Moss

Those star-linen sheets
will hoard you sooner
than you wish they have to.

Watering water
you pour your days.

So blend the truths
to the mixture
of your despair.
Be careful too —
you will live there.

Weep now,
weep evermore.
A sea that can drag
a rhinoceros to its shore.

I

know

how still
the lady moon

lies in her pretending.

I've felt the same

thrill obsolete.

no noise

escape.

the sound of

love is ending.

Machine of Images

Desirant of my liquide beauty,
you pour a hazed bronze syrup
of mouth,
beckoning more than eyes.

You imagine:
ballet neck, long elbow,
stem of tête.
You imagine me a Juliet,
carrier of Capulet hair,
lilaced to loving.

You imagine my eyebrows—
the arch of wings.
Teeth gates of pearl.
You hurl yourself to heaven.

You imagine I hold more
than demise.
Head a basket
for beautiful things.
You: image-in.

She is Lion in desire,
Speaking self softer,
exhaling breath like laughter.
Her predator mouth
prey to your dominant, bound mind:
illusioning
a girl supine—
she, sublime—
an invertebrate
who does not wish for a spine.

You, circusing her around on a wire.
You want her catatonic
with desire.

Do you not descry a danger?
Lion types: *I love you.*
You cage her twice back.

She purrs to you at nighttime
that she is not a cat.

Will I be another
who has taken their vie?
Will I be some other
sad set of once-eyes?
This chest I do not comprehend.
Am I really this? So damned?
There is cinema to see, there is poetry to read.
You tell me.
There are places to be.
Still my throat and my chest do not agree.
These are tenants, vying for a home less
than a darkness.
Why can't I ever digest this pain?
There are words waiting,
to write.
You tell me.
I fell me.
I am as desperate as a tear
to not stay in the eye.
Can I trust this
I —
who tells me
it is easy to die.
I know I am wrong,
but tell me, please tell me.

I sleep too much, I sleep too much
Will every year contain this much
douleur?

In the morning

In the morning I will forget
what number the months correspond to.

In the morning I will remiss
I ever had a sister who held the whole world
singular in her yellow sundress.

In the morning I will shutter
into cover — configuring it lover,
and squeeze into seeing.

In the morning I will forget I ever heard a song,
and advance along unsure lines
of this umbrella-edge of sound, toe-wet.

In the morning I will neglect
to regret that I am
twenty now,
and that I don't know
even a single vowel
of this foreign, throat-stealing world,
that demands I make my clumsy choices
and make them now — pack
my suitcase in the night and leave
the *passé composé*
in stained, stained bed
alight.

In the morning I forget to assume
I own a future,
and live in drowsy-white
nothingness for an unfurnished hour
or two —
before I remember —
not in the morning —
that Blue
exists.
before I remember that Death
is a full stop
after which no sentence starts,
and that I've always been fickle
with punctuation —
before I tie together
that mind is memory's ashtray
and that you never allow me
to light the cigarette of you

In the morning I forget to reprimand
my idle, often prying hand —
reaching for stovetop love

every gasoline-blue day,
and tossing the burn victims away—
always indecisive
of their category.

In the morning, chords of heart are not
clumsy-plucked
like a blind pianist
enunciating Einaudi.

In the morning there is no garden
neighbour—eyes full—over
two-days-dead son, telling me
that I deserve a good job,
unlike immigrant she —
who is lucky
to be in a factory at all.

The sun, unused, leaks through again.

The radio is blue again.
You told me we're not through again.
The rain does not reach through again.
The world returns and slew again.

The sun, unused, leaks through again.

I am undone by you again.
Sister, I need a home to ruin again.
My fishlike throat untrue again.
The sequins on my body are blazing as

The sun, unused, leaks through again.

I am the child hiding and seeking
in secret need of you again.
Maybe it was I who was the hurricane
that came through again.
Your saxophone heart bleats in sinew again.
The drugs are decomposers
in the tide of you, again.

The sun, unused, leaks through again.

I am dead, undead, then dead to you again.
I wished that I was two again.
You were not born;
but a year, it grew again.
You float out, rather new, again.

I, too dumb to protect you again.
Insentient as hooks — again.
Skilled fisher,
memory captures two again.
So we do not know what to do again.

Still, the sun, unused, leaks through again.

I saw my own eyes opening like Adam

slowly as lead satin

bread
like
rising

from
the
ovens

read
you
famine
in
literature
of

they are
blinking
undressed almonds— white
of
folios
espying,
bodies
their

that used to be bats
each blink a reminder
of
sudden

relapse.

they became bright as buckle — knife-sharp but so soft — loss
your
multiverse meanings still tumble of
Atlantics
dry

I know myself
big enough to know
I cannot know
myself.

That stranger of tomorrow —
to second, to minute,
to sorrow.

I want to die, many times
and many times I will.

I fill my cup
but become other
every time I fill.

stars
art
ificial
to the
sky

we are here
the same
way, we will
die,

a
boy, who is
a boy
despite
his age

is far too
serious
about the
page

that we
are spilled
onto like

godless,
forgotten
ink

I tell you I love them — those spiders in the sky.
you tell me just how bad they are for the environment.
and I
think just how soon we are going to die, dissemblin g

I think what
a startling acceptance
we post to the sky.

the earth will be here
so much longer
than you or I.

snow that staggers backwards

up into the sky

because we
don't have
a long time to
survive

this
des
per
ation,

this
eu
phor
ia,

this
gun
pow
der

i n
your
eyes.

Nuit Noël

The sky is blue and lovely.

I — cat moving against the night,
nuzzling
some little yellow pin of a star.

The sky like a vast stomach.

I — barefoot, like something that undies.

The stars — white flies.

Stilled, dissected headlights with no road —
many-eyelashed and cat-alone.

Red roses painted white.

Good night,
the missing moon
that sunk like an apple core might,
towards the strange lacune.

For what does a floor do
but wait for the fall of you?

Inside Your Mind
(after The 1975)

The insanity

that I am here while the crickets
itch

and that I am not that spiderweb
in that ditch.

That I am listening,
and that I want.

“I’ve been watching you walk.
I’ve been learning
the way that you talk.”

While my heart leaks and brinks
and fools with
thinks
a morbid star tells me
he’s ten thousand nights away
from dying
in morse code of blinks.

“The back of your head
is at the front of my mind.”

“Soon I’ll crack it open
just to see what’s inside.”

Mute moon in your cocoon
of sky.
Amnesiac lune —
you were here only last night.

Moon, moon — are the stars
yours?
Faithful adherents
in the soft black
heart attack of Time?

Luna, Luna — it's painful,
lonely, lifting lucy
across oceans
of objects fated twice.

I think the Tour Eiffel,
if she could tell you,
would spell out sonnets
to enchant and
to compel you
in your alphabet of light.

The consolation
of your living
is in her sight.

You pull the Earth
with all your might.

I know what it's like.

An Hour With You

After a day of touching everyone else's skin,
I wonder what it means to you
to go home
and touch your partner's skin, or your own.
I wonder what skin means to you.

I wonder what your own thigh means to you—
your own thigh, which I graze when you walk by.
I wonder if you dream of your skin
leaving your body,
leaving all bodies.

I wonder if only the antithesis to Debussy
can untie you.
Your hand is warm inside my own.
You break my skin's solitude.

There are alleys in the body, in the bone,
that no one goes down much.

All my sisters inside
my throat.

at 2am
they swim, they float.

my mother
is my sister too,
who birthed me blue
with dependency
and no address.

she sold my sister and pretended
the money was to pay her rent.

my sister is the purest thing
I cannot bear.

she pours out of my eyes,

a boat
that dismantles in the air.

tear
falls
like
a me
petal *of*
drops onto the pavement of my arm, from the roses of water inside

Like: to break

There was one star alone
in the sky,
and a blazered beautiful boy
who I had to keep my eyes
away from.

So I watched my star—
(the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen,
more beautiful
than my first snow).

I yearned
to see again—photograph—
capture— be permitted
to focus on.

As the sky relinquishes bursts of melancholy:

"I love overheard conversation.
I was just walking
along, and I heard: *'because I'm a Capricorn*
I'm not trying to get laid
tonight.'
It just came floating
across
the room."

One star startling the sky.
I yearned to name the rose.
So I watched my star.

Did he love another?
Would his shoes
ever show
again?

"You're the most beautiful thing
I've ever seen"
I say
in mind's
braver voice—

remembering my tulip rouge,
the lonely star,
the light that wouldn't work.

You.
Shine of shoes.
You—
too uncomfortable

to properly watch.

“How many stars do you think
you can see
with the eye naked?”

In the garden of shadows
he is
careless about the
careless thing
that falls.

A violin bow
sliding down
his guitar strings.

I have to photograph his
face—
kiss his lips
through camera.

His hands. His hands. His hands. His hands.

Poet of the beat.
Belt. Buttons. Blazer. Smile.

Eyes.
Instant of eyes.

I wish they were
on me—
free
from his body.

“Just under a thousand,
and the way it was counted
was three guys lying on their backs,
dividing up the sky.”

It was the first time
that had happened.
It wasn’t excitement.
It was *tristesse* — pain.

Tilt of face.
Tilt not again.
Tilt beautifully.

It’s easy to fall in love,
but so hard to break a heart.
So don’t worry—
it’s out of the way

at the start;
for mine's
already
smat.*

Like: to break a chair,
a leg,
a strap.

---

* "Smat": a non-standard term, used here to mean "broken," "ruined," "worn out," or "smashed," chosen for its compact, fractured sound. The sense can also be intuited from the word "smattering," which refers to a slight or incomplete knowledge of something, or a small amount.

Jacket over a golden dress, hanging by a window

Is this what happiness feels like?
The still, perfect of a night
bluely
fallen.
Like a blue apple that reassembles
in the morning:
my blue jacket
like a curtain.
The throat bubbling as though blood were
champagne,
and all of the rain falls inside of you,
sounding beautiful on your pavement bones.
Yes—your pavement of bones
that time,
for now walks on.

My jacket over my falling dress is a
Michelangelo—more sublime and emotion-filled
than any mountain.

I love the way it looks at me.
(It does not see). I love
the way it waits for me.

It exists more beautiful
than I could ever be.
It lingers as loved as the stars.
It hangs upon a silver question mark.
It touches things and does not flinch
with thought-fear.
It casts shadows it will never see.
God it's beautiful to me.

is the
Life snow-
eating
pearl
in death
side of
the dark

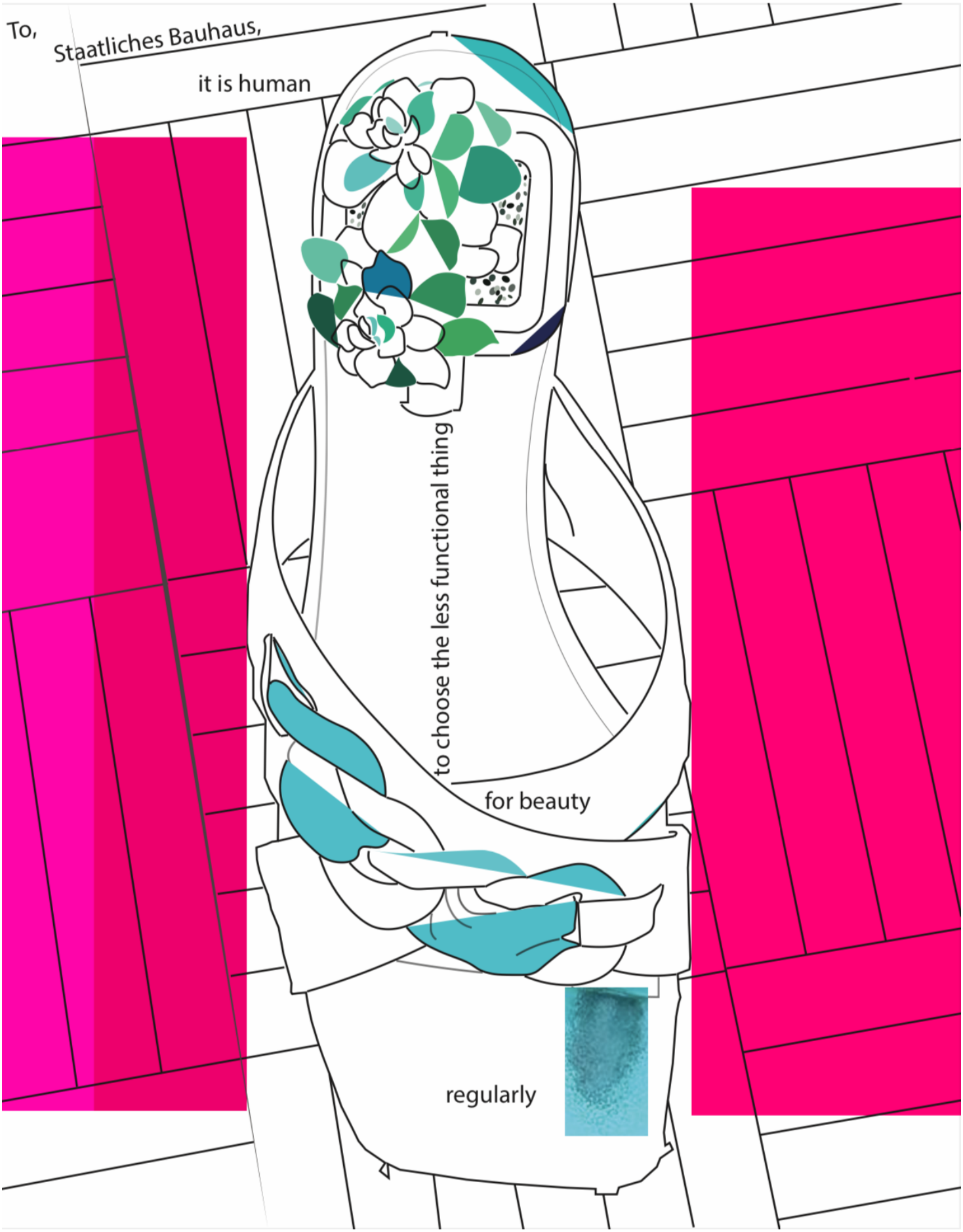
Unmissable Giraffe,
the way that you Stare —

Unkissable (at last,
your baguette throat bare)

Remissible, your laugh,
through Chambers of hair.

Your hair flees when you
loosen a cough,
I roll my eyes away,
thoroughly lost
in your Windmill-soft
air.

Your Wardrobe of hair —
I'll knock upon there.


To,
Staatliches Bauhaus,
it is human
to choose the less functional thing
for beauty
regularly

Tomorrow knows nobody,
Is new to Town.

Let's invite her over.

(Your laugh:
the ever unpredictable
production of sound.)

Let's invite him round.

The leaves are snoring in heaves of green —
—
‘ “ — Asleep on the tree that daggers all of
them
— “
‘ Tall — ‘
bed —
— “ ‘
—You
said “
A year ago that I was your favourite mattress — “
“ —
‘ —
— The leaves are snowing, twirling,
seen
—
The snow is green, but falling — “ “
—
“ “ —
Tree— does not scream
— “
Borrower, Serene —
“ —
—
“ — I am all the leaves appalling
—
Your voice is as tranquil as steam — ‘
“ —
—
— “ ‘
The next tree is so — violent
—
— The corpses all are terrible
hordes of
“ — drip
“ — “ ping
— spleen
“ —
—“
“ — s
“ “ —
“ — ‘

“ “ —
— ” “
“ “
“”
“ ‘ ‘ “

Welcome into my heart again.
Make sure you wipe your feet on my mouth.

To
Catch your shoulders
like two butterflies
in my eyes.

To
catch you
like a day.

To
make you mean something.

To
make you a piece of me—
a bite.

To
rub my feet all over
the finish-lines of your hair.

To
tell all other eyes that I was the fastest.

To
say I trapped you by accident
meals later.

That I am the fattest
to
feed you apology, apology, apology—
pan-fried, like two eggs.

Say you caught me instead.

Tell your eyelashes to stay silent.

To
shut up.

a
W r o
m r s
e

e
L t

g
o e
S
o
S m e
e b d-

s s
t h
e
e

Veena.

Tilting my world cleaner.
Trying to teach
me to dance as you fly.
Then I make us cry.

White flowers
give their very small shadows
to your leg.
I fall onto rocks
and you hit
your head.

I'm thinking of all your
thoughts that never get said.

And your hand is music,
if you could touch it.
And your face is Arabic,
if I could read it.

And your voice is
everything.
I wish I could keep it.

I wrote to you on white ribbon, and it bled.
I wrote to you in the sea, and the pink
ink turned red.
I wrote to you in the sink as the tap
shed.
I wrote to you on a peach, but the skin
fled.
I wrote to you in the sky, but it fell
beneath a cloud's bed.
I wrote to you on a bird,
now the bird's dead.

I wrote to you on the heart
that you never read.

I ended up texting you instead.
And it only read:

"You left your book beside my bed."

Here are the words
that really killed the bird:

In August you left your book beside my bed,
and I noticed the ribbon that you were using
as a bookmark,
and wondered if that ribbon had ever been
inside your hair,
and if it had I thought of how that ribbon
is now used to keeping
the smallest space between things.

The pinkness of the sky right now reminds me
of the inside of shells,
and that day we went to the beach,
and a bird-shaped kite fell toward you
and flew through your hair.

That's how soft your hair was that day,
inside the air.
I can close my eyes at any moment,
and I am there.

I wish you were mine
364 days of the year,
and that one day
you'd disappear
and become a hair pin.

I never wear them,
but on this day
I'd hide you inside my hair…

I wish you were a hair pin
364 days of the year,
and that one day
you'd become human.

Every night I'd lie next to you
until you had a head
upon the pillow
that was once your bed…

A whole body
for a whole body.

The emptiness has come again
in its empty way.
I think it will stay
for Marches.
I don't know how to become, or when.
I am alone—
as untouched as those places
in the sea that scrape
almost fish-school
but miss it.

I see all the lives they're living,
and there's all this fear crushed
into the ends of my chest.
It devours my rest with lips
as patient as rose-sound.

When I try to speak it—
their language—I oblique it.
And 'free' is less and less
beautiful to me.

I am isolate.
Will you please, will you please
violate me.

My phone says it's my fault:
that I cut away contact
like branches;
because I guess I believe
there's something to see,
if I last the deforestry of choices.

There's a map in my chest
with lines I can't see.

And I'm going somewhere—
to Death, certainly—
and I want to be someone,
though I am as small
as a tulip
inside eternity.

Dressed in
electric guitar

Nudge me
with your car

My pain is emerging from its chrysalis

1c
loud

Window View of Me

Everything I own is in this room.
My heart, my blue suitcase,
the not-dead song inside my ears,
Some clothes that are too big
To wear tomorrow,
Some clothes that will all fit,
And I am hollow.

A camera with empty eyes
Waiting for Paris.
Huffing in still solitude,
Angry with resent,
Silent.

Anne Sexton is in quarters.
I don't know what I am trying to tell you.

The books I haven't read are on the windowsill
To be donated.
The clutter of choice has vacated.
And it isn't nice.
And it isn't worse.

My shoes are dull and dirty.
I wish that I was thirty
days backward,
So I could kick my shin on the table again—
See the blood, later on,
That is Latin for animal.

The Body

I really don't know her.

How she'll dress me tomorrow.
How much rest
she will let me borrow.
How she'll fill me
with sorrow.

Who she will sell me
I'm needing.
The pain that she's feeding
under the table
of our mind.

She brings guests.
She does tests.
The thoughts she forgets—
well, I keep them.

She's concerned with our teeth.

She cars us to a place where
men drill them.
She feels inhuman,
but I'm the body.
"I could drill it, fill it,"
our eyes dance
at his handsome
innuendo.
(I think she feels like an automobile
when she's reminded of me.)

She kicks things like a pest,
and I assemble the bleeding.

I feel like I am always auditioning
for a role that will never become.

I am someone, for a threadfall,
and then utterly undone.

She has strange thoughts while driving.
I push up fear to our throat,
Reminding her we're living
on a line that borders dying.
Politely.
It's a thrill for her, I'm finding.

She's always fiddling at rewinding
the things she does to me.

I suspect she is trying.

What she performs with me is always changing.
She's rearranging.
Touching.
Abrupting.
Paper-cutting.

Then sometimes,
she's almost nothing.
As quiet as a blouse in the corner of me.

The conversations we have are not
consensual.
She doesn't ask me often
gentle
for things.

She's detrimental,
stepping over Central Station's yellow lines.
Cue my convention
of stopping,
of levying fines.

I issue her a tremble, I reassemble
the chemicals in our mind.

It's accused I am a fountain of denying.
I'm replying
in the only language
I can.

She's foreign
still.

And I am reigned by a maniac,
a ravager

who's softly crying—
there's no denying,
compels me.

Lime

… A dog bite, a searchlight

The crickets are bright as tinsel in my ears.
Their bell-throats fiddle.

And he—
while he
is seeing her
for the first time.
Smiling.
Telling all the jokes
he rehearsed during me.

He smells of cologne and hair product,
and she wears the fluff of train seats.
(He spent at least an hour amending his hair.)

She touches his hand,
laughs,
and they walk their streets
together.

I have every kiss inside my throat.
I'm trying
to forget you,
to let your love be gone
inside my head.

And when I cry,
tears thrash like birds
re-clashing into windows until they're dead.

Right now she is an open window,
and you have not bled.

I abhor that I hate her—
hate her smile, hate her teeth.

I love you. I love you.
I love you.
And I am loveless as …

Incoming call

How are you?
I'm okay. How are you?
Why are you so sad?

Because the moon, another sky, is finding.

Are you crying?
No.

Sinking Sand

Do you know how hard it is to get free of love,
once it has bumped along your skin
like a car you forgot to let in?

How much pain equals how much love?

I want to throw my laughter up
from all the years before
this.

Why, when someone offers me a pinecone,
will I give my self up?
Here's all of me for a pinecone.
I'm melting—hurry,
sink me up.

I will love you for nothing
but a grain of salt,

and cry ten tonnes of salt
outside of me
when the timer stops its hiccups.

You can have all of me
for a sand.
Here's my hand, here's my hand.

You're a child with a pinecone,
and I am sinking sand.

Romeo and Juliet were saner.
You re-sent my heart not once,
but I will post it you again.

I poured acid down my house
to live under your Christmas tree.
please love me,
please love me,
please love me,

My stomach threw away its bag.
I'm told a new one costs
two months, at least

The cake mixture of our hearts
is rising up—
too ready.

I'm not ready to burn this,
but I don't have a bag.

You are brutal as a blunt knife persisting,
and I am sinking sand.

Eyewitness Accounts

I was only an ashtray
when I was four.

I was only a door,
barricaded,
when the window fell
to the garden floor.
I wanted to escape with her,
but I was only a door.

I was only her legs.
Her mind pled for safety,
but I was only her legs.

I was only her head
when it bled.

I was only the bathtub water
turning red.

I was only the doorknob
she flinched into
when she fled.

I was only a boy
throwing love
like a ball.

I was only a hand
dropping.

I was only a mouth
begging for one more throw.

I was only a pillow
predictably drenched
from a blistery "No."

I was only her hair
catching rainbow
from the sun's steady throw.

I was only the sun
letting you know.

The Spoons

We all look the same.
Sleek, silver, useful, tame.

Allison has been dropped,
kicked, sat in, licked, mopped.
Marie was accidentally bitten…
from the way that it stopped — she was
suddenly tossed —
as though it was her fault… yet we keep telling
her it's not.

Florentina has been in many kinds of ice cream,
and now she feels cold and soft.

One of us stays permanently in a jar.
Clumps of sugar stick to her
and harden like tar.
Her shape is like that of a garden —
wild and then hacked.
The surplus is snatched
and she is suddenly smooth
and somehow more lonely
in all that space — every hour of window-light.
It is only chance that we are not in her place,
enduring the night.

We all touch very intimately.
When Florentina slides into me
she inhabits a shiver.
Marie and Alli both
are variations of a whimper.
My party story is that I was licked by a dog.

We see the forks
and species of knives
unpredictably at night.
The knives give us no reason
to believe they are violent.
The forks are beautiful,
tall and silent.

Sometimes one or two of us are taken out
to stir the coffee
and release the tea —
a scalding bath
for a victimless morning
or a party.

Those nights are when we see
small white children

who are gracelessly
tossed
into a black trap
and discarded.

We've felt dread
since the singing started.

I've felt the terror of the huntsman
with a cup
around its throat.

Dissevered legs
afloat inside a glass.

Who cannot ask
why this is happening.

A spider, dead.
Caught in its own web.

	r			s
	a	s		e
	i	w	k	h
Dear Meadows,	n	gro	sil	clot

You are a bed for a heartbeat.

All that I can see.
She did not regard once me.
Oh, to be a cloud, a tree…

Oh, to be the song that helps you breathe.

I am so happy I'm not the napkin
Left on the floor to grieve.

I feel you
the way you feel the leaves.

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Drive me somewhere else 2:54 pm

Please 2:54 pm

Okay 2:55 pm

To the stars, it'll take four hours 2:55 pm

I hope you like cars 2:55 pm

Not particularly 2:55 pm

I hope you like me then 2:55 pm

That's a go 2:55 pm

Hands full of basil,
your scent that would
dazzle
an agamic into touching.

I had a lot of green in my eyes today,
and I felt like every car would hit me.

Sur une mort

Oh there is a gun to my head,
and instead of stocking my mouth full of beg, I ask
to be read
the time of death
(and loiter)
(as though there is a page to turn from here.)

When he turned his car around and sped,
I knew that I was déjà-dead.
I do not plead for one more while;
I look upon the ground and smile.
So it is concrete
(my feet last meet.)

When I look upon his hand I pile
imagined bricks weighing down his arm's short isle.
Aim lower.
The heart should meet the mediocre bullet, not the head
that will prove me sure I'm dead.

Recall how my two knees remake
my corse into a wooden stake.
The guessing game has stopped right here.
A shot will fire loud and clear—
.

I hear the click
and think—

You hear the squeak of car-wheels have their fun;
my body is a terra thing
over-run.

Someone dipped their fingers in the sky.
Some of me is missing.

A cloud runs through a bus.

Someone spilt sky on the sky.
We'll never find it now.

There's a hypocrisy that comes with the body.
You're running out of time now,
fainting in the final act.

Fainting is the final act.
Someone rolls over your spine,
and you crack.

You were soaked in sun
You couldn't see the blond girl run.

The yellow hair of street lamps has been let out to sway
after a very long day,
falling onto streets and shoulders.

One lamp in the neighbourhood
lets down lavender light,
hair so violet and bright
it changes the colour of jackets.

The Street, Asking For You

You walk in me every night.
Except the last five—
Are you alright?

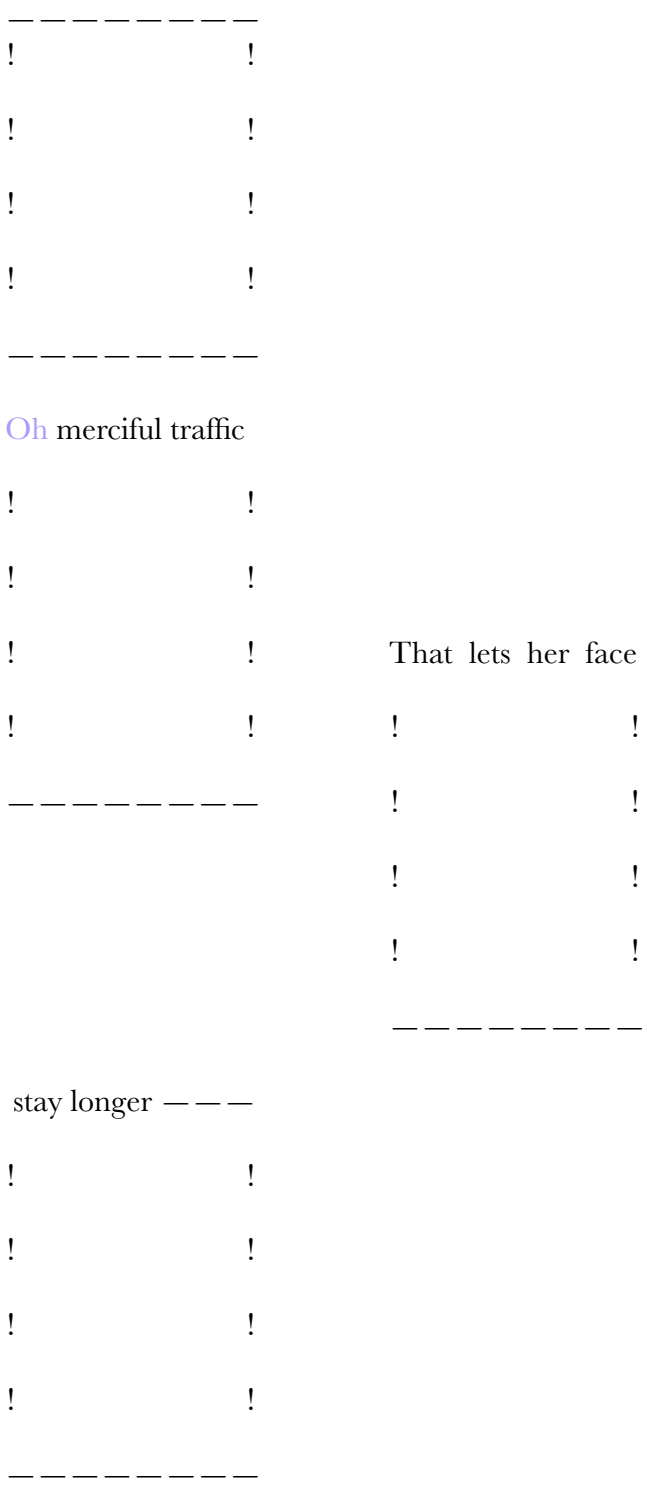
last night she told me she broke a wine glass.
today she added
with her teeth.

last night I saw a woman quarter—

last night
I saw a car driving with all its doors open

last night she divided
one singular raspberry
into fours
and shared it across the table

I don’t have.
You ask for.


Oh merciful traffic
That lets her face
stay longer

My husband said, before I ate

If I add every human as my staggering misery,
sticky nihilism will hinder every liberty.
If I look to every branch of tree,
I can understand
the places made for me.

And though I can't erase the human hand,
I won't keep my silk inside—
I will cling to every strand.

My husband said, before I ate,
a phrase which made despair abate:
Those giants have their misery too.
They fear a bigger hand—like you.

A black bug on a black tea-towel

inconnu

I do not feel like killing you.

I want you to turn me to the colour of is.

I want you to slice the apples
falling from my mouth.

I want you to lighten the burden—
to change the burden's colour—
we are both inept,
but we can whiten.

I want you to turn me to the colour of ribs.
I don't know what any of this is,
but I recognise the colour
as it floats
toward the knife's wrists
until I quieten.

I want you to chill me to the time of yes,
to halt the colour's degradation.

I want you to tell me
you want to turn me to the colour of a cylinder.

J’ai peur d’elle, et je suis complètement amoureuse.
Une cascade de noirceur.
Une fleur d’ombres tombantes.
J’ai pleuré une cascade de noirceur.

Je lui ai envoyé des bouquets de tristesse
pour qu’ils tombent sur la terre.
Ses yeux se fondent dans une cascade d’ombre.

Les lignes d’ombre de mon corps et de mon âme
deviennent panthères lorsque je la traque
pour la tenir dans ma mire.

Elle ne me donne rien quand je veux tout ;
elle dessine mon désir en n’accédant pas à mes requêtes.
Elle me donne du blanc — j’espace, pour elle.

J’hallucine les hallucinations.
La lumière du soleil s'appuie sur elle-même
lorsqu'elle tombe sur elle.
La lune lui a envoyé une échelle.

Je la suis jusqu'au blanc.
J'espace, pour elle.
Je ne sais pas combien de temps ça peut durer pour deux.

Le jour, l'année, l'après-midi

Le jour où j'avais besoin d'un ami,
il était ici
avec des mains blanches pleins de papillons,
et des bouquins dans son sang.

L'année où j'avais besoin d'un câlin,
il est apparu avec une langue anglaise
et m'a donné son cœur en échantillons.

L'après-midi où j'avais besoin
de quelque chose de beau à voir,
un arbre a poussé une aile d'ange pour moi.

Love Poem for Nasr

The quiet
blue darkening
is falling
from the cut
of a strange flower.

Disturbing the pattern
of the white-black floor,
the small pool
becomes
a door —

your foot, barely
small enough to enter,
taps to open.

Your leg is taken—
without intent
you're sent
more and more
into a velvet-sage
flashed jungle
where miscreated butterflies
prowl
on tentacles
and skies
clutter up like debris.

You look down at your knees
to see your body made
of sea-lace.

You feel for your eyes —
touch the juts
that images gather cuts against.

You think you are a mermaid
or a bee.
The noise you're making
as you scarcely move
is not aqueous
but a zizz—
you see a body being eaten.

The closing colour on the mouth—
you'd eliminate
the world to kiss.

You hope it is not the boy you love—
but it always is.

you lead me by rope to a hill of ants,
you tell me to dance…
you've covered me in honey,
left nothing to chance.

I am constantly craving
for you to dissatisfy me.
I want matter and antimatter.

I want you stern, authoritative.
I want you never to tell me what to do.

I want you to love me,
but I don't want you to want me.
I want you to want me,
but I don't want you certain.

I want me to love you,
but I won't love you burdened.

I am selfish.
Selfless.
I want you selfless.
Selfish.

I want you satisfied.

I like the way you liquefy me,
but won't tolerate your slip in me.

I want you inhuman.
I want you never to sleep.
I want you to sleep in me.

I want you in no country but ours.
I want you foreign and devoured.
I want you unbitten.

I want you to unbutton my skirt
for hours.

I like rain, and I like umbrellas.
I love you, and I don't mind your absence.

I want you alive
and never t've been born.

I want you in my bed in the morning;
I want your yawn.

I want your mouth clung over a thorn.
I want your mouth asleep—
never to have been encountered.

I want to break you out of my heart
like a splinter.

I want to stop wanting to call you
every time my mouth touches a crêpe.

I want to rake all of you outside of me
and bang closed the door.

I want to stop lying against the floor,
peeping.

I'm an incher, an itcher,
an opener, an "or."

I'm only a sufferer
looking to score.

I'm a creep
crawling over your floor.

Put your foot over—
end the hover—
and call.

You're cold on purpose.
I do not know my name anymore.
I slide tears to you across the floor.

My tears to you along the floor—
is there a door?

We never know when we're acting anymore.

I tell myself, icing perfume along my jaw,
I will cease to think of you in thirty days,
I'm sure.
I ask myself what I am lying for.

This love we made—
should we eat it all?

Love can't go just like that,
I tell myself as I plait
my dreams of you, my dreams of you,
so they will not mat.

"Where were you Sunday?"
I ask you that.

What you never said

"Indigo, quit messing about and come
marry me.

Indigo, no heart can be lived in for free.

Indigo, I love you, but you're just a body,
really, to me.

Indigo, here's my mother—I love her
even though she hates me.
My mother hates
herself and her life, and we're staying
with her for New Year's Eve.

Indigo,
here's my father, who is softer than any man
you've seen. You will love me
for the idea that he is like me.

Indigo, I don't drive because I'm afraid
where I'll be.

Indigo, I don't have a dream,
and your photographs aren't blurry.

Indigo, I'm just cruising along, and I don't
like the sea.

Indigo I'm a postman, and
you'll be happy with me."

As long as you're breathing
you're near a heaven

His
O merciful *shoulder*
rain*touch*
that lets*her*

Love Poem

I was waiting on your doorstep, my thumbprint
in the green paint of your apartment block's door.

I leapt into a blue puddle of paint
running to the bus the morning after we made love.
The driver knelt into his knee. With his newspaper,
he wiped the sky away from me.

I met a woman who had children's feet.
Her tiny shoes made standing in a street
a complicated, wavy dance. A snowflake fell
into my glance and died upon my sleeve.
Everything seemed like it was make-believe.

One bus-misleading afternoon,
snow fell and fell and fell on me.
I was crying — my tears were kneeling
in the sleet.

When I got home, you kissed my feet
and breathed into my hands.

edit undo
edit undo
edit undo
file new

click.
hover… edit “redo?”

too much sanity can break a can's heart.

Maybe one reason to live is that we go around
fixing each other's loneliness like taps—
at least for a little while.

Yes, I feel free, and I melt into the pavement.

And you're looking for answers, and also pleasure.
And you're running from pain.

And music baptises you when all day you hear
noise.
And I wanted so badly to shake you to me last night.
And I retract myself, and retract myself,
from a love that is retreating.

The world confuses me,
but I don't untie the knots inside my head.
If answers bled,
I'm spotless.

So often my love is an apology.
I'm sorry.

Did I love you, or did I love England?
Was it you, or was it freedom?
Or was it a hunger for a certain kind of poverty?
Was I only experimenting with sovereignty?

"I broke it for you (so you don't have to pay),"
the bus driver jokes today.

Your eyes ripple my thoughts.

The rain is a blanket for my heart.
Run over me like you are a bus
and I am a roundabout.

And we are what nature is doing, but
a leaf doesn't have an empty heart that
crumples first.

All suffering has gravity.
I dreamt you brought the moon to my gate.

The world is sleeping—do you touch her hair, or
do you leave silently?

Time will eat your tears.
Time will turn off your fears.

Rain is falling sound onto Apollinaire,
and we are children who have clean hearts, but make

messes everywhere.

What would the Moon be?
A golf ball in my memory.

you smell of sunscreen and warm brown shove,
and I flinch when you hug me.
you smell of love—

sweet and abrasive,
you boxing-glove of louder.
I always asking “are you happy?”

I bother a table,
once-bitten chest, like a forgotten apple.
I convince myself to remember
that sometimes my emptiness
is a piece of cotton,
almost forgotten
on the hem of a skirt.

The rain has wiped the stars clean.

Never ever enough

Never ever enough
coffee.

Never ever enough—
someone lit a fire
on your neck.

Never ever enough—
a girl crying in the park
is running through my heart.

Never ever enough
pangs of love.

Never ever enough
lunatics.

"Never ever enough,"
drizzle voices.

Never ever enough
chipped happiness.

A ribbon of light walks across the coffee table,
waltzes into water cups.

I've been lower than words go.

I've been patient
in a traffic jam of angels—
never ever enough.

the sky has twenty purple tongues.

You are not part of the procession;
you are the stone at the centre of my heart.

Each bee will make,
on average, about
half a teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.

as I spend two bees' lifetimes in my tea,
each bee will be me—
never ever enough.

I had a mother for a night.
Never ever enough.

Our mother couldn't read or write.

Who can say who loved more?
Who has the scales for our hearts?

you make me cry the saxophone's tears—
Never ever enough.

Hug me.
Never ever enough.

Why do you love me?
Never ever enough.

Because everything makes sense
when you're standing in the way of all images.

Because you have no aftertaste.

Because you have no aftertaste, and I'm left
wondering
where you went when you have left.

Because your leavings are real to me.
Because I understand you, and I love to
understand.

If only you could walk in me
and hear nothing—
never ever enough.

Love is a kind of exposure therapy—
never ever enough.

An iceberg is a furry animal that lives in Antartica.
People visit Antarctica to look at paintings in
museums.

I was irreparably late.
Never ever enough.

Everything is to die to see.

Euphoria indeed.
Never ever enough.

pluck me out of loneliness,
like a berry
gone from punnet.

The roses spill like snow,
and we will lose our luck.

I was plucked from the stars.

I was plucked from reptiles
to wear these arms.

some lives are just
holding space.

does the gorilla even know it will die?

words at your feet
slipped off like a dress.

"feel hugged."
Never ever enough

"I don't want to read a … synopsis? yeah,
rather, give me the first sentence."
Never ever enough.

he answers my phone call "hey, former lover"
never ever enough.

And I'm kissing your shoulder
and thinking of our expiration date.

And thinking of the woman
fitting her hand into the hand
of the man who I will love—
never ever enough—
and thinking how dare she.

And as I listen to your breathing
And whisper *I love you*,
never ever enough,
I'm thinking—
how dare I.

And you kiss his eyelids—
never ever enough.

are you very drunk?
Never ever enough.

is she lovely?

if we're just dust, then it doesn't matter who you
kiss.

Every day you keep forgetting about death.
letters are neat and beautiful things.
Never ever enough.

I love the way your eyelashes sleep upon your skin.

I ash
the sunset.
I unlock like a flower.

No matter where you go,
no matter where you touch—

Your car

A dent in the back,
a dent that all other cars lack
when I search for you.

A door without a handle,
a space like your mouth—
I wait for you to open.

Ash everywhere.

Black orchids sprayed into the air,
your mouth is on my knuckle.
"Here, take it. I'll buy another one tomorrow."
(you're laughing)
"That's what you get for hitting me."
"A gift?" (we're laughing)

Ash and orchids inside my hair.

Your cinnamon gum,
a week later
is lemon.

A condom cloaked in tissues.

Your cross.

He gives too much and he
takes too much.

When eyes become lakes

I

sometimes

drive

my

car

just

to

be

looked

at

Some beauty has to be left behind.

My mouth is waiting for the touch of your mouth,
and the air inside of me wants to fall
into a forest of your presence.

If I am not yours then let me heal from the hope
of being.

You say
"I like how you walk
I like how you laugh
I like the smell of your hair
I love how you yawn…"

You say you love me
purely, truly, hard, and bad,
but you're making me sad.

"Do you want to live here forever?"

Can I?

"Yes, you can."

Can I have you?

"Yes, you can."

"I would love to— but just not right here."

Your love
is only a dove you cut open.

You say it is a voice from above that you follow.

You taught me a selflessness and a grace I had never known.
But you'll never let me enter your home.

I want to see you for an hour, a minute, a bus-stop, a flower.

You once wanted to cut off one finger,
but wouldn't tell me what you had done.

my body lies
under a teardrop

I kiss you

I hear the dead sound
of your footstep.

I feel the heaviness
of sweetness while it piles
like a habit.
My limbs twitch
under a mountain
of hard snow and sugar grain.
I ask you to come here again.

we lick each other
like a teaspoon,
a shoulder of grass,
a chandelier of pain.

You say you don't love me
with your hand at the hilt
of my thigh.

As I start to cry,
the stars choke
the sky,
and everything melts.

You have hurt me
        purely, truly, hard, and bad.
But I have let you make me sad.

I have laid myself open
like I was only a dove.
The person who I was supposed to love.

we
little
needles of
the
unhurt
thing

sting

for just
a small
while.

Joe Helliwell
SPECIALISED
EVENT SAFETY TEAM

He didn't know what the word
serene meant.
But he had the most serene face
I'd ever seen.

Addition

Helium-blue balloons added to the sky.
blue plus blue.
white plus white.
Have you seen enough of the moon?

I had a skipping rope
wrapped around my throat
when I hadn't even seen snow.

At twenty-one, I decided
twenty-four made sense
as a good time to go.

What at all did I know?

the moon washes me.

i break off a piece of my arm
to amuse her.

love doesn't mean me
any harm.

Claudio

“Sometimes when I have dreams
And people talk to me
They say
are you alive?”

Imagine
for the first time being told
that your life is made of years—

and then disappears.

Imagine
for the first time feeling
sound enter your ears.

Imagine
hearing voices
rise from pages…

being changed by words
to tears.

I go
to walk my empty heart.
People's eyes look at me
like I'm some event.
I will get better—
or won't.
It is too soon.
I'll linger now
and give my eyes the moon.

If I slander, if I misuse
your time,
it is my second try at crying,
you hold inside your mind
while I'm fouling up mine,
a black dog lies in bright grass — sublime.

I have been starving
so I can taste your shadow.

swept empty.

My solitude allows me
to taste you now.

Your every need is satisfied—
and that is love.

The moment doesn't need much.

The sapphire crunch of the sky.

The trees are raining sound,
raining sand—

The sky has been training stars
to turn off on command.

I am beginning to understand
that understanding is a small thing.

Yeser

because your voice is butter and eyelash,
and your thoughts are violet,
and your eyes are refractions

because you're a secret not impatient to be found,
you are not afraid of making the necessary subtractions
to follow the implications to their sound.

"I have no memories of oranges."

Your vine of laughter is unfurling.

This is one letter repeating.
It is this:

I have a beautiful answer for this—
it is just this breath.

You talk to me in an orchid alphabet
as you're walking through the field of pain.
And though the grass will never end,
you find everything beautiful, again and again.

Do you hear the sound of light because you are alone,

or are you alone because you hear the sound of light?

Reem

I don't mind the lilac
and the slipping
into thunder.

She was brightness—
Reem.
She said,
"All the secrets
they're with me.
And I love to be
a sanctuary."

Her happiness is sanctity,
reminding me that it is
an art — belonging
to people.

Reem wanted,
at least, to belong
to someone after her parents.

Reem was loved as a child.
You can see it.
You can hear it.

She wears a fake ring
from an Egyptian market
in Istanbul.

She finds homes for refugees.

Each day she says
"Thank you very much"
to God.

“I need to be a blessing.
In the end
you are under the ground.”

Reem isn’t religious,
but she believes in God.

“Love for love —
it doesn’t work,” she tells me.

“I tell you I love myself,
enough for me, myself.”

Celine Song

You're
in the cinema.
Tears on your pants.

Alone like this,
and not alone,
you love to be a wooden desk
by a window.
Watching something that has god in it.

I know needing something,
but not wanting to leave.

Emilia is already born inside of me.
There's no way to be empty
when you're alive.

Discomfort for beauty
is the essence of life.

My feelings breathe,
and I can grieve for someone else's heart.

Humiliation is a heat.
I feel it fill the people behind me
when a man asks to see their ticket.

The pianist blows warmth
into his cupped hands.

Everything that can be dropped
is dropped.

The song waits inside them.
We wait to be held by the song,

They're so still,
it's as though they're inside music itself,
waiting to be born.

The piano is the bed.

The fluttering of his hands
commands our bodies silence.

I'm imbued.

The violin is my heart.

Everything that can be dropped
will be dropped.

When the night's arrows
miss my heart,
kiss my heart.

I want to be embraced
the way that I embrace.

I want to lace love into everything,
and I want my tears
to be worth something.

I want to buzz and feel like a clear sky,
and I want to give someone's soul
peace.
And to laugh.

I don't just want a guy—
I want to touch a circle of eyes.

And I want to be snowing in the sun,
and glowing when you come

Ember

Oh Ember, don't you know
you've still got time to grow.

You're kissing Fred tonight
under cemetery light.
Boy, it was time to break.

England is pretty cold.

Amber light gets you down.
Peel yourself off the ground.

Oh Ember, don't you know
you've still got time to go.

We're in your car tonight.
Rain just keeps tapping down.

Have you got time tonight?
I'll wear that scent you like.

Velvet and smoke tonight —
I know that's what you like.

You're not yet underground,
so yeah, I'm coming round.

Spilling ink on my bed
so I can read what you just said.

Spilling ink
on my bed.

Oh Ember, don't you know?

Rain just keeps tapping down.
Velvet and smoke tonight.

You're not yet underground.
You've still got time to grow.

Have you got time tonight?

I have poetry all over my body.
It seems I can hardly move
a section of myself.

I don't know
what it would be like
to kiss you.

But I've seen your slow eyes.
Like the first sunrise on earth.